



# Hon. Robert T. Matsui

## Member of Congress

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*Robert T. Matsui*

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### STATEMENT BY CONGRESSMAN ROBERT T. MATSUI ON THE SYRIA ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY RESTORATION ACT

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Robert T. Matsui issued the following statement today on his support for the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Act:

“The Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act is one that has been long overdue. I support this act and am very pleased that the President has agreed this legislation needs to be considered on the House floor.

“Since the inception of the State Department’s list of state sponsors of terrorism, Syria has been designated prominently on the list. Syria has been on this list now for almost 25 years, yet fewer sanctions apply to Syria than any other country on the state sponsor of terrorism list. This legislation should have been passed 25 years ago.

“Numerous terrorist groups, including Hizballah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hamas, maintain offices or training camps in Syria or areas of Syrian-occupied Lebanon. Syria is in clear violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1373 which directs all states to “refrain from providing any form of support” for terrorists.

“In addition, even recently Syria has allowed visas to be given to terrorist individuals who have gone into Iraq for the purpose of doing damage to the infrastructure and to put the lives of American men and women in jeopardy.

“I am also deeply concerned about Syria’s efforts to expand its chemical weapons program to the development to biological weapons and their efforts to increase the range of ballistic missiles. Syria already holds a stockpile of the nerve agent sarin, but is trying to develop more toxic and persistent nerve agents. Considering the close ties the country maintains with deadly terrorist organizations, Syrian WMD programs are of grave concern.

“The Syria Accountability Act will finally hold this nation accountable for their terrorist ties. We will not accept Syria's support of terrorism. This legislation will ban the export of any military or dual use items until the President determines that Syria ends its support for terrorism, withdraws its armed forces from Lebanon, ceases development and deployment of weapons of mass destruction, and halts support of terrorist activities in Iraq.

*(continued)*



“We must hold accountable those nations that support terrorist organizations and the violence they export. The Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act will deal with the challenge emanating from Syria with very simple, but effective sanctions.

“I urge the adoption of this legislation. And I would like to thank Representatives Eliot Engel for his sponsorship and the subcommittee Chair Ileana Ros-Lehtinen for their leadership on this critical issue.”

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